WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method of accessing information, comprising the steps of:

2   distributing information objects across a plurality of servers;

3   maintaining a centralized status of each of said servers;

4   receiving a request for one of said information objects;

5   inspecting said centralized status to determine an availability of one of said servers

6   having said information object; and

7   selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively

8   redirecting said request to said one server.

1   2.   The method according to claim 1 further comprising a step of selectively

2   transmitting an error message in response to said request and said inspecting step resulting in

3   a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1   3.   The method according to claim 1 wherein said step of selectively responding

2   to said request includes redirecting said request to one of (i) said one server and (ii) an error

3   handling object.

1   4.   The method according to claim 3 wherein said error handling object comprises

2   an error message.

1   5.   The method according to claim 3 wherein said error handling object comprises

2   a redirection command.

1   6.   The method according to claim 1 wherein each of said information objects

2   comprise a web page.

1   7.   The method according to claim 1 wherein said maintaining step includes

2   periodically updating a status of each of said servers.

1   8.   The method according to claim 7 wherein said updating step includes pinging

2   said servers.

1   9.   An information server system comprising

2   a plurality of servers, each hosting a different information object;

3   a centralized database storing a status of each of said servers;

4   a communication interface configured to receive a request for one of said information

5   objects; and

6   a controller responsive to said request and to said status of each of said servers for

7   selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively redirecting said

8   request to one of said servers.

1   10.   The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller is configured to

2   selectively transmit an error message in response to said request and said inspecting step

3   resulting in a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1   11.   The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller selectively responds

2   to said request by redirecting said request to one of (i) said servers and (ii) an error handling

3   object.

1   12.   The system according to claim 11 wherein said error handling object

2   comprises an error message.

1   13.   The system according to claim 11 wherein said error handling object

2 comprises a redirection command.

1   14.   The system according to claim 9 wherein each of said information objects

2 comprise respective web pages.

1   15.   The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller is configured to

2 periodically update said status of said servers stored in said database.

1   16.   The system according to claim 15 wherein said controller is configured to

2 periodically ping each of said servers.

1   17.   A method of providing a website, comprising the steps of:

2   storing web pages on a plurality of distinct web servers;

3   maintaining a centralized status of each of said web servers;

4   receiving a request from a remote client for one of said web pages;

5   identifying a status of a one of said web servers hosting said one web page; and

6   selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively

7 redirecting said remote client to said one server.

1   18.   The method according to claim 17 further comprising a step of selectively

2 transmitting an error message in response to said request and said identifying step resulting in

3 a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1   19.   The method according to claim 17 wherein said step of periodically updating a

2 status of each of said servers.

Case No. 10002104-1

1   20.   The method according to claim 19 wherein said updating step includes pinging

2   said servers.

A

Add Al >